

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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INFO AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, CA, CU

SUBJECT: CBC REPORTS PENDING CUBA TRADE DEAL WITH MANITOBA

1. JANUARY 7 CBC RADIO AND TV NEWSCASTS REPORTED "BIG DEAL" UNDER NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CUBA AND MANITOBA DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE UNDER WHICH MANITOBA ORGANIZING \$7 MILLION PACKAGE FOR COMPLETE REFURBISHING OF CUBA'S HOTEL NACIONAL. PACKAGE WOULD INCLUDE ALL NEEDED EQUIPMENT AND FURNISHINGS UP TO AND INCLUDING ASH TRAYS. MANITOBA REPORTEDLY SOURCING MOST OF GOODS WITHIN THE PROVINCE, BUT ALSO TAPPING SOME CANADIAN SUPPLIERS OUTSIDE MANITOBA.

2. CBC SEES THIS DEAL AS INDICATION OF REVIVAL OF CUBA'S INTEREST IN NORTH AMERICAN TOURISM.

3. COMMENT: AS OF MORNING JANUARY 8, CANADIAN PRESS HAD NOT YET PICKED UP AND AMPLIFIED THIS REPORT. ON BASIS OF SKETCHY NEWSCASTS, EMBASSY SPECULATES THAT MANITOBA TRADING CORPORATION, ESTABLISHED BY MANITOBA LEGISLATURE JUNE 14, 1974 AS AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, IS THE ORGANIZER OF THE CANADIAN SIDE OF THIS DEAL. MANITOBA TRADING CORPORATION GIVES ADVICE TO EXPORTERS, ORGANIZES

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EXHIBITS FOR FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC TRADE SHOWS, BRINGS

FOREIGN BUYERS TO MANITOBA AND ORGANIZES TRADE MISSIONS
ABROAD.

4. ALSO, ACTING AS AN AGENT, THE CORPORATION MAY:
LOCATE FOREIGN BUYERS FOR MANITOBA GOODS, ARRANGE FOR
DELIVERY OF PRODUCTS ON COMMISSION BASIS, BUY PRODUCTS
FROM MANITOBA FIRMS FOR EXPORT TO FOREIGN BUYERS AT
A SMALL PROFIT, EXTEND CREDIT TO FOREIGN BUYERS,
ASSIST IN NEGOTIATING RECIPROCAL TRADE ARRANGEMENTS
WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, AND ORGANIZE FIRMS INTO
CONSORTIA TO MAKE THEM MORE COMPETITIVE ABROAD. WITH
RESPECT TO THESE MORE AMBITIOUS ACTIVITIES, THE
CORPORATION MAY WELL BE CUTTING ITS TEETH ON A
RELATIVELY LARGE TRANSACTION IN THIS REPORTED DEAL
WITH CUBA.

5. EMBASSY NOTED WITH INTEREST AND REPORTED (OTTAWA
A-556, NOVEMBER 4, 1974) FEDERAL INDUSTRY, TRADE AND
COMMERCE MINISTER GILLESPIE'S REMARKS ABOUT PROVINCIAL
GOVERNMENTS' TRADING CORPORATIONS IN HIS OCTOBER 29
OTTAWA ADDRESS TO CANADIAN EXPORT ASSOCIATION. HE
SAID THEY COULD CREATE DISTORTIONS WITHIN DOMESTIC
MARKET AND "BALKANIZE OUR TRADING EFFORTS AND PROVIDE
A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SOURCE OF INTER-PROVINCIAL
COMPETITION". WE AWAIT WITH INTEREST ANY COMMENT
FROM MR. GILLESPIE ON SUBJECT DEAL.
PORTER

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